15 Things You Need To Know About The Devil's Breath

There are some seriously scary substances out there in the world. And while your mother may have cautioned you about the dangers of smoking up, or, as she probably put it, "doing the dooby," it is pro

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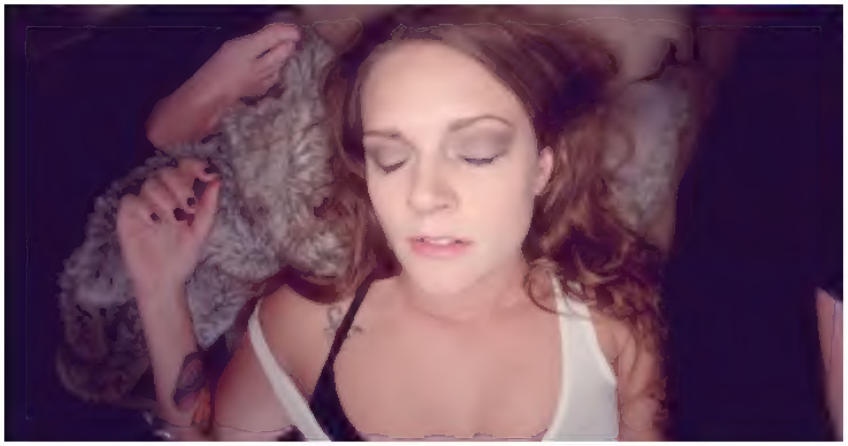

There are some seriously scary substances out there in the world. And while your mother may have cautioned you about the dangers of smoking up, or, as she probably put it, "doing the dooby," it is probably the least harmful drug you can get your hands on, with the possible exception of regular strength Tylenol. Your mother should have been more scared of you taking up crystal meth, moving into a rundown house trailer on the edge of town with your best "friend" Dougie and his pet python, and trying to mug high school freshmen for their lunch money whenever you're sober enough to make a comprehensive effort at it. Or overdosing on fentanyl, which seems to be a growing trend these days.

Or, instead of worrying that you might dabble in "the reefer," your mother could spend her sleepless nights panicking about the possibility of you falling victim to the Devil's Breath, which might be one of the freakier drugs out there these days. If you spent enough time digging around online, you can find some insane things about it, ranging from memory loss to self-amputation. Yeah, self-amputation. As in cutting off your own body parts. That's messed up. And come on, you had to know that a drug called the Devil's Breath would not exactly be a lovely, positive experience. But if that didn't convince you, read on. We've compiled a list of fifteen facts you should probably know about the Devil's Breath. But maybe don't send this list to your mother. She might worry.

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It Can Turn You Into A Zombie

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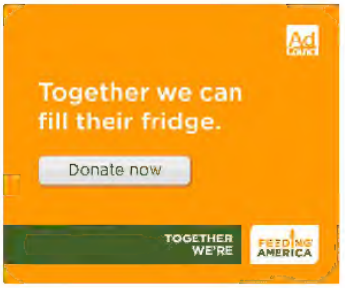

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One of the headline friendly characteristics of the Devil's Breath is that it can turn you into a zombie. Not the flesh-eating, brain-craving, George Romero kind of zombie. More the staggering, dazed, amnesiac kind of zombie. There are reports of people being drugged and then losing two or three days of their memory, waking up in an unfamiliar place with no recollection of what happened or what they had done. Which is crazy and terrifying. Even crazier and more terrifying is that the drug can allegedly make you extremely suggestible, resulting in you doing things you would not normally do just because someone told you to. That sounds truly horrifying. Although a drug that turned you into a literal member of the undead would trump that, wouldn't it? Although, on the plus side, AMC wouldn't have to keep hiring extras for Rick and the crew to kill off on *The Walking Dead*; they would just have to wrangle a few actual zombies together for each episode.

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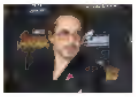

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Okay, this is easily one of the worst traits of the Devil's Breath.

You know in those crime movies where some conniving, genius character manages to get a hold of a drug that has no smell or taste? Usually, if this manipulative lunatic is the good guy in the film, there is a long, drawn out, overly intense scene where said good guy has to sneak the magical drug into the bad guy's drink without being detected. It is all very, very suspenseful. Unless it is real life and there really is a tasteless, odorless, super scary drug and you are out drinking and dancing at a sleazy club somewhere. Then it is less suspenseful and more just straight up unpleasant, because that tasteless, odorless drug could be the Devil's Breath. So we can't even offer some helpful advice on what it smells like so that you can watch out for it (or... smell out for it?), because there is nothing to smell!

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It Can Make You Do Crazy Things

While on the Devil's Breath, people have reportedly done insanely stupid things such as emptying their bank accounts, giving away their cars, and offering people the keys to their houses. According to the head doctor of the toxicology department at the San Jose University Hospital, the drug blocks neurotransmitters that send information to the part of the brain that deals with short term memory. In other words, anything you do while high on the Devil's Breath you will not remember because the brain will not record the memory. And on top of that, it makes you more open to suggestion. No wonder it is so commonly used by criminals. A bit of Devil's Breath in your drink and they can get you to give them all your money, your car, and your house without remembering that any of that happened.

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It Can Be Used In The Bedroom... Sort Of

Now when we say "it can be used in the bedroom", we do not mean that the right dosage will turn you into some kind of sex god. Let us be very, very clear: do not use this drug while getting frisky. It is not a Colombian Viagra. In fact, you probably shouldn't use this drug at all. That is sort of the point of this article, if you hadn't figured that out yet.

No, what we're really talking about is how some criminals have administered the Devil's Breath to their victims. There are reports of women smearing the drug on their breasts while at clubs, and then convincing unsuspecting men, usually drunken tourists, to lick or kiss them. And while pretty much all heterosexual men will agree that boobs are awesome, the ol' Motorboat of Death (as we like to call it) is definitely not worth the cost of getting messed up on this drug.

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It's Found Mostly In Colombia

It seems a little odd that such a powerful, terrifying drug is mostly found in one small South American country, but that appears to be the case with the Devil's Breath, as it is primarily found in Colombia. According to local officials, it is commonly used on unsuspecting tourists, including foreign dignitaries and ambassadors, at bars and nightclubs. Of course, local Colombians have also been known to have been victimized by the drug. In 2012, Colombian police reported that almost 1,200 people had fallen victim to criminals using the Devil's Breath. An article from the mid 1990s claimed that half of all emergency room admissions in Bogota, Colombia were a result of Devil's Breath poisoning. So if you have Colombia on your itinerary anytime soon, make sure to keep an eye on your drink at the bar while you're there, otherwise you might wake up a few days later missing your wallet. Or your kidney.

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It Can Kill You

This one should not be all that surprising, to be perfectly honest. The Devil's Breath, in a high enough dosage, can send you to your grave. Of course, almost anything in a high enough dosage can kill you. Even water. According to the kinds of people who study this stuff, it only takes about six litres of water to kill someone who weights 165 lbs. If you manage to ingest that much water, your kidneys can't handle it all and the excess H_2O gets into your cells, including the cells in your brain, and they swell up. And you can probably imagine the unpleasantness of having your brain cells swell. So it isn't just scary drugs like fentanyl, crystal meth, or the Devil's Breath that can kill you. Water can kill you. So can oxygen (that's what happens to scuba divers when they ascend improperly: oxygen toxicity.) Yeah, the two most important substances to our species' existence can still kill us if you get too much of it.

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It Can Make You Hurt Yourself

Prepare to grimace. Like... a lot.

One of the most extreme side effects of the Devil's Breath is self-harm. There have been reported cases of individuals who have done severe damage to their own bodies while high on the Devil's Breath or something similar. The worst case is likely that of a young man who drank a cup of something called Brugmansia tea, which is a drink derived from the same plant that is the main ingredient in the Devil's Breath. This poor bastard had only a single cup and, at first, appeared to be fine. Later, however, he used a pair of gardening shears to amputate his tongue and his penis (I get shivers just typing that out). Those are almost certainly the two worst body parts for a man to cut off. We are pretty sure that if they told kids that story in the anti-drug classes they make you take in school, no single boy would ever dare to do any drug ever again.

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It Goes By Many Names

While its street name is the Devil's Breath, this drug has a lot of other names as well. Although none of them are quite as cool as the Devil's Breath, which sounds like a creepy, European crime thriller film. Or a crappy horror novel. Either way, it's cooler than scopolamine, which is the technical term for it. Another scientific title for it is hyoscine. You can find scopolamine in plants from the nightshade family, which includes henbane, jimson weed, angel's trumpets, and corkwood. Which just goes to show that plants with cool names can be super freaking dangerous. Angel's trumpets might look fancy and be a great accent flower for your crazy Aunt Ruth's backyard garden, but that doesn't mean that you should boil it in some water and chug it. Not unless you want to lose your memory, cut off some body parts, and give away your life savings.

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It Can Cause Hallucinations

Yes, the Devil's Breath is one of the many, many psychoactive drugs out there that can alter your state of mind and send you on a hallucinatory trip down the corridor of a rainbow-colored hellscape. Of course, the quality of the hallucinations ranges from drug to drug. You could end up in a Salvador Dahli inspired world of absurdism and melting clocks while on LSD. You could spend hours sinking into the infinite fluff of an impossibly large stuffed, pink unicorn while on ecstasy. You could smell and taste shapes and colors after getting a little too high on marijuana. Or you could tear open your own skin while trying to get at the bugs

crawling through your bloodstream while messed up on heroin. If the other qualities of the Devil's Breath are any indication, the hallucinations you would experience on it probably won't be the spirals of glitter and rainbows type. More the "disembowel myself because I am pretty sure my intestines are actually live snakes" type.

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It's Used In Spiritual Rituals

Apparently the Devil's Breath, or at least drugs derived from the same plant, have been used in certain spiritual rituals in South America for hundreds of years. We don't know the details of all of the rituals it has been used in, but considering how badly it can mess you up, we are pretty confident that these aren't the kinds of rituals that end up with everyone holding hands and singing Kumbaya together.

The one ritual we could dig up (apologies in advance for that pun) involved the funeral practices of a particular culture. When the head of a household died, it seems that his servants, and perhaps certain members of his family, were buried with him. Alive. As in not yet dead. As in they would drug these poor bastards with the Devil's Breath and then bury them alive with their dead master. That is a seriously twisted memorial service.

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It Has Legitimate Medical Uses

Okay, so if you go to your doctor and he prescribes you scopolamine (the technical name for the Devil's Breath), do not assume he is trying to drug you and steal your wallet. The fact of the matter is that it has several legitimate medical uses. A very common one is with motion sickness. Apparently, scopolamine is rather adept at quashing nausea, so it is also used to help patients who are feeling sick to their stomach after an operation, and even to treat pregnant women with morning sickness. It has also been known to have been used to help quell the tremors in those who suffer from Parkinson's disease. Which is good. Especially compared to all the other horrific characteristics of scopolamine. And, just in case you're not all that bright and were thinking that you could just pick up some Devil's Breath the next time you were feeling a little queasy, let us nip that little brain glitch in the bud. The dosages of scopolamine for these maladies are extremely small compared to what you're going to pick up from your unattended drink in a Colombian strip club.

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It Can Make You Aggressive

This is one of those double-edged swords in terms of the drug's side effects. There are reports of people who have dabbled in the Devil's Breath, either voluntarily or not, becoming extremely aggressive and even violent while high. On one hand, that is not great. Usually if you get high, lose all your memory of an event, and end up beating the crap out of someone with your bare hands, it was a very bad night. However, it can have a silver lining. Because the drug is commonly used by criminals to turn their victims into suggestible zombies, sometimes those criminals become the victims when the middle-aged dad in khaki shorts whose appletini they spiked at the local bar turns into the Hulk and opens a can of fanny pack-wearing whoop-ass. According to hospitals in Colombia, it is not entirely uncommon for two individuals to be admitted simultaneously: the victim who was drugged and the criminal they beat up.

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It Can Be Found In The United States

While the form of the drug known as the Devil's Breath is not particularly common in the good ol' US of A, the plant that it comes from is pretty damn common. In fact, it grows all over the country. Even better than that, the family of plant that the drug is derived from grows on literally every continent in the world except for Antarctica because nothing at all grows there. The fact that these plants are so ubiquitous makes us wonder why the Devil's Breath isn't more common globally. You would think that enterprising drug dealers and thieving criminals all over the world would be on top of that— growing the perfectly legal plants in their trashy backyards and then harvesting them in order to create the scariest drug currently on the market. Then again, it is probably a very good thing that this hasn't really caught on. The last thing we need is a drug-induced zombie epidemic on our hands.

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It's Used In Interrogations

Due to its properties that cause amnesia, suggestibility, and hallucinations, the Devil's Breath and its various forms have been used throughout history as a sort of truth serum. Back in the 1920s, it was tested on several people, including accused criminals and young women, and found to be rather successful in turning the subjects into truth telling machines. And while that seems like a mighty handy tool for groups like the CIA and Homeland Security, its usage in this capacity was dropped due to the insane side effects of the drug. And it's not just America that has experiments with using it as a truth serum either. It is known that state police in Czechoslovakia used the drug at least three times to draw out confessions from alleged conspirators against the government. And, as always, there are rumours that the Nazis employed it during their human experiments on Holocaust victims during World War II. Which isn't hard to believe. The scary nature of the Devil's Breath fits in well with the horrors of the Holocaust.

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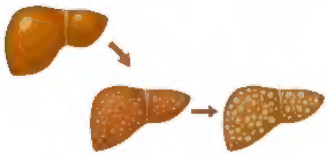

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There Are A LOT Of Urban Legends About It

There are all sorts of horror stories circulating the internet about the Devil's Breath, what it can do to you, and how it can be administered. And while a whole hell of a lot of them are absolutely true, there are a few that are very much not true. One of the most prominent urban legends involves drugging unsuspecting victims with a business card. According to the rumours, the crafty criminals soak their business cards in the drug and then pass them off to

their victims, who are poisoned when the Devil's Breath is soaked into their skin from the car. Fortunately for everyone who just suddenly developed a phobia of business cards, the dosage capable of being transmitted through the skin like this is quite low. Low enough that you don't really have to worry about being abducted and robbed after politely accepting some overly enthusiastic entrepreneur's business card.

Sources: cia.gov, files.shroomery.org, medicaldaily.com, thestar.com, drugs.com,

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